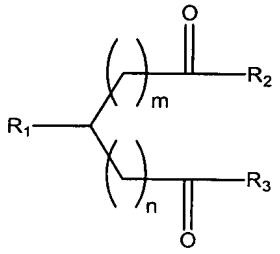
CLAIMS

1. A process for the production of a fuel composition having a NACE corrosion rating of between 0% and 25%, comprising the steps of:

(i) contacting a fuel with a corrosion inhibitor of formula (I) to provide an initial fuel composition



(I)

wherein m and n are each independently an integer from 0 to 10;

wherein R_1 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbyl group;

wherein

either R_2 is OR_4 and R_3 is OR_5, wherein R_4 and R_5 are selected from hydrogen and hydrocarbyl-OH and wherein at least one of R_4 and R_5 is hydrogen;

or R_2 and R_3 together represent —O—;

and

(ii) contacting the initial fuel composition with a caustic material to provide the fuel composition without subsequent addition of a corrosion inhibitor.

2. A process according to claim 1 wherein m and n are each independently an integer from 0 to 5.

3. A process according to claim 1 or 2 wherein one of m and n is 0 and the other of m and n is 1.

4. A process according to claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein R_1 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

5. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein R_1 is an optionally substituted alkyl or alkenyl group.

6. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein R_1 is an optionally substituted branched alkyl or alkenyl group.

7. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein R_1 is a polyisobutenyl group.

8. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein R_1 has between 10 and 200 carbon atoms.

9. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein R_1 has between 12 and 32 carbon atoms.

10. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein R_1 has a molecular weight of from 250 to 400.

11. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein R_1 has a molecular weight of approximately 260 or approximately 360.

12. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein R_2 is OR_4 and R_3 is OR_5.

13. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein R_4 and R_5 are selected from hydrogen and (C_xH_{2x})-OH wherein x is an integer of at least 1.

14. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein R_4 and R_5 are selected from hydrogen and $(CH_2)_y$-OH wherein y is an integer of at least 1.

15. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein R_4 and R_5 are both hydrogen.

16. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein one of m and n is 0 and the other of m and n is 1, R_1 is a polyisobutenyl group with a molecular weight of approximately 260 or 360, R_2 is OR_4, R_3 is OR_5 and R_4 and R_5 are both hydrogen.

17. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, in step (i), the fuel is treated with 1 to 20 ptb of a corrosion inhibitor of formula (I).

18. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, in step (i), the fuel is treated with 1 to 10 ptb of a corrosion inhibitor of formula (I).

19. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, in step (ii), the caustic material is an alkaline solution.

20. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, in step (ii), the caustic material is a 0.001% - 30% w/w alkaline solution.

21. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, in step (ii), the caustic material is a 1% - 10% w/w alkaline solution.

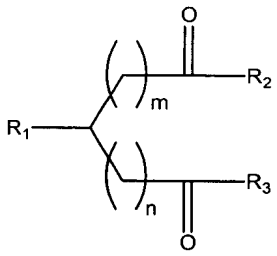
22. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, in step (ii), the caustic material is NaOH(aq) or KOH(aq).

23. A process according to any one of the preceding claims wherein, in step (ii), the caustic material is NaOH(aq).

24. A fuel composition obtained or obtainable by a process according to any one of the preceding claims.

25. A method of inhibiting corrosion on a metal surface exposed to a fuel comprising the steps of:

(i) contacting the fuel with a corrosion inhibitor of formula (I) to provide an initial fuel composition



(I)

wherein m and n are each independently an integer from 0 to 10;

wherein R_1 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbyl group;

wherein

either R_2 is OR_4 and R_3 is OR_5, wherein R_4 and R_5 are selected from hydrogen and hydrocarbyl-OH and wherein at least one of R_4 and R_5 is hydrogen;

or R_2 and R_3 together represent —O— ;

(ii) contacting the initial fuel composition with a caustic material to provide a fuel composition; and

(iii) exposing the metal surface to the fuel composition.

26. A method according to claim 25 wherein the corrosion inhibitor of formula (I) is as defined in any one of claims 2 to 16 and/or step (i) is as defined in either of claims 17 or 18 and/or step (ii) is as defined in any one of claims 19 to 23.

27. Use of a corrosion inhibitor of formula (I) as defined in any one of claims 1 to 16 for providing caustic wash resistant corrosion inhibition.

28. A process substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the Examples.

29. A fuel composition substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the Examples.

30. A method substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the Examples.

31. Use substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the Examples.